Claims

[c1]   A training management system comprising:

a course library including course information for plurality of training courses, each training course comprising a plurality of course documents organized in a sequence for presentation to a student, the course information for each course including assignment information indicating classes of users to which the course may be assigned;

a user database including user information including a user entry for each of a plurality of users having actual or potential responsibility for one or more courses, the user database including user status information including the status of a user with respect to one or more courses;

a training administration module for associating courses, students and other users having responsibilities for courses, and for retrieving and reporting user and course information, the training administration module being operative to retrieve user information from the user database and course information from the course library and to process and format the user information and course information for display, the training administration module being further operative to modify the course information and user information to assign courses to classes of users; and

a course creation module for creating courses, the course creation module including a document editor having access to a template database comprising a plurality of stored templates, the course creation module being operative to create a course comprising a plurality of course documents, the document editor being operative to create a document by retrieving a stored template and placing appropriate text, graphics and other material in the template in response to user entries, the course creation module also including a course creation buffer for temporary storage of course documents after creation by the document editor, the course creation module being operative to store course documents as they are created, the course creation module being further operative to organize the course documents into a desired sequence in response to user selections in order to form a completed course and to store the course in the course library.

[c2]   The system of claim 1 wherein each user entry includes profile information for one or more user profiles applicable to the user and one of which may be selected by the user at any one time, each user profile including profile information specifying the information and functions available to the user when the user has selected that profile.

[c3]   The system of claim 2 wherein the profile information includes course responsibility information applicable to the profile and the user and wherein the course responsibility information specifies all courses for which the user has responsibility and the nature of the responsibility of the user for the course.

[c4]   The system of claim 3 wherein the user entry for each user may include one or more of a student profile enabling a student to register for and take one or more available courses, an administrator profile giving an administrator oversight responsibility for one or more courses and allowing an administrator to create, edit or assign a course and to review the progress of students taking or assigned to courses for which the administrator has responsibility, a reviewer profile giving the reviewer responsibility to review one or more courses and to enter comments an suggestions which are conveyed to the administrator having responsibility for the course, a manager profile giving a manager oversight responsibility for one or more users and allowing the manager to assign courses to students for which the manager has responsibility and to review the progress of students for whom the manager has responsibility, and a training manager profile, allowing the training manager complete access to all information in the system and allowing the training manager to perform all functions available under a student profile, an administrator profile, a reviewer profile or a manager profile.

[c5]   The system of claim 4 wherein each course comprises a sequence of hypertext pages including links to preceding and following pages in the course and wherein each course includes an introductory page outlining the course and providing links to subsequent pages in the course.

[c6]   The system of claim 5 wherein each course is organized into a sequence of chapters and wherein each chapter is further organized into a sequence of

sections.

[c7]   The system of claim 6 wherein each chapter includes an introductory page listing the sections in the chapter with hypertext links to each section.

[c8]   The system of claim 7 wherein each section includes an introductory page listing the pages comprising the section with hypertext links to each page.

[c9]   The system of claim 8 wherein the course creation module receives initial course information from a user upon a selection by the user to create a course, the course information including a course title and numerical information indicating how many chapters are to make up the course and, upon submission of the information by the user, organizes an initial course based on the information, the initial course framework including a course introductory page and a number of blank chapters, the number of blank chapters being the number indicated in the initial course information, each blank chapter including a chapter introductory page and a single section, the single section including a section introductory page, the course introductory page including an outline of the course with links to each chapter and section and the chapter introductory page including an outline of the chapter with a link to the section, the course creation module being operative to add additional chapters, sections or pages to the initial course framework upon a user selection and to update the introductory pages to include the added elements.

[c10]   The system of claim 9 , wherein the course creation module further comprises a course content database and wherein the document editor is operative to retrieve course elements from the course content database for incorporation into a course document.

[c11]   The system of claim 10 , wherein each user entry includes a student profile, each student profile including a student status with respect to each course for which the student is eligible.

[c12]   The system of claim 11 , wherein the training administration module is operative to edit the status of each student according to selections made by an authorized user.

[c13]   The system of claim 12 , wherein the training administration module is operative to modify the status of each student with respect to a course according to activities undertaken by the student in relation to the course.

[c14]   The system of claim 13 , wherein the training administration module is operative to retrieve course information and user information and prepare reports presenting selected course and student information.

[c15]   A method of training administration, comprising the steps of:
receiving identifying information from a user;
upon validation of the identifying information, retrieving a user entry identifying the status of the user with respect to a set of training administration resources including a user database including user information for a plurality of users, a course library including a plurality of training courses and course building and administration tools;
presenting the user with a selection of available profiles, each profile being associated with a user function; and
upon selection by the user of a desired profile, presenting the user with tools and resources appropriate to the profile and giving the user access to the user database and course library in order to carry out activities associated with the profile, available activities including registration for and taking of courses, course creation and editing, course review, assignment of courses to students and review of student status with respect to courses.

[c16]   The method of claim 15 , wherein the available user profiles include an administrator profile and wherein activities associated with the administrator profile include creation of courses, assignment of courses to students and review of information relating to courses and students.

[c17]   The method of claim 16 wherein creation of courses includes receiving initial course data from the user and creating a course framework based on the initial course data.

[c18]   The method of claim 17 , wherein creation of courses further includes creation of course elements in response to selections and entries from the user.

[c19]   The method of claim 18 , wherein creation of course elements includes presenting a selection of templates to the user, receiving a user selection of a template, receiving user entries in appropriate areas of the template and processing the template and the user entries to create the course element.

[c20]   The method of claim 19 , wherein activities associated with the administrator profile further include course assignment and wherein course assignment includes associating a course with one or more organizational groups.

[c21]   The method of claim 20 , wherein activities associated with the administrator profile further include receiving a user command to provide reports of course information and furnishing the reports in response to the user command, the reports including information relating to student progress in the course.

[c22]   The method of claim 21 , wherein activities associated with the reviewer profile include receiving a command from a reviewer to review a course and, in response to the command, presenting the course to the reviewer as it would be seen by a student, receiving review notes entered by the reviewer, attaching the review notes to elements of the course selected by the reviewer and storing the review notes in association with the course.

[c23]   The method of claim 22 , wherein activities associated with the manager profile include listing all students for whom a manager has supervisory responsibility and retrieving and displaying information relating to the progress of those students in assigned courses.

[c24]   The method of claim 23 , wherein activities associated with the student profile include displaying a list of available courses in response to a student command and enrolling the student in a selected course upon a further command.

[c25]   The method of claim 24 , wherein activities associated with the student profile further include presenting a course to a student in response to a student selection, presenting the course including display of course elements to the student in response to selections and commands by the student.

[c26]
         The method of claim 25 , wherein presenting the course includes displaying an

introductory element of the course if the course has not previously been presented to the student and displaying an element most recently viewed if the course has previously been presented to the student.

[c27]   The method of claim <u>26</u> , wherein activities associated with the student profile further include storing information about a student's activities in a course in association with student identifying information.